

OSCE 2007 HUMAN DIMENSION IMPLEMENTATION MEETING
WARSAW 5 OCTOBER 2007

**Statement by Mr Roberto LAMPONI, Director of Co-operation
Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs
Council of Europe**

Mr Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Council of Europe welcomes the opportunity to take part in the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and thanks you, Chairman, for the excellent organisation.

I bring you warm greetings from our Secretary General, Terry Davis, who regrets not being with you today but follows closely all aspects of the co-operation with the OSCE.

Co-operation and complementarity are indeed of the essence: all issues on the agenda of this meeting are covered also by the Programme of Activities of the Council of Europe!

I don't need to spend any time to speak about the importance of these issues for the promotion of human rights, rule of law and democracy in Europe. I'd rather use my few minutes to say how to go about it.

*
* *

The Chairmen in Office and the Secretaries General of our two Organisations held a High Level "2+2" meeting in Madrid on 3 May last. They commended the work of the Council of Europe- OSCE Coordination Group and agreed to pursue the policy of holding joint activities in the four priority areas (action against terrorism, the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, combating trafficking in human beings, promoting tolerance and non-discrimination), building on some good recent examples.

To quote a few, the Council of Europe associated the OSCE in the Conference "Why terrorism? Addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism" held in April this year.

The joint publication titled “National Minority Standards – a compilation of the OSCE and Council of Europe texts” brought together all relevant texts in a pragmatic way, without trying to argue which is more binding, or which is more effective.

Prospects for further joint actions and organising joint events were also identified in the other areas:

On the fight against trafficking in human beings for instance, both Organisations should help each other in promoting ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on one hand, and implementation of the OSCE commitments on the other hand, so that both the legal and the political weapons of this fight are mutually reinforced.

When it comes to tolerance and non-discrimination, the already established co-operation should be further enhanced with emphasis on joint activities to be conducted in the fields of youth, as well as to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

*
* *

Mr Chairman,

The Human Dimension Implementation Meetings, such as the present one, are valuable in helping to identify topical issues and shortcomings to be addressed, be it at national or at European level.

This is why a number of staff members of the Council of Europe attended the working sessions, in order to learn and to contribute.

Human Dimension Implementation Meetings are also valuable because they bring together representatives of the national Governments, who are ultimately those responsible for determining the mandates of our two Organisations.

The frequent calls for better co-operation between the OSCE and the Council of Europe should go hand in hand with calls for better co-ordination between the competent people and desks in the Capitals.

To conclude, our leaders have indicated the way forward:

- there is room and there is work to do for the OSCE and for the Council of Europe on our Continent; and
- joint action is to be preferred, whenever the two Organisations have concurring competences to offer.

Now, back to our offices, back to our work. Before we meet again in October next year, we shall all have plenty of opportunities to put these directives into practice.